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ABSTRACT

Motivation to do good work in reading is a learned behavior. Values involve beliefs and worth and are likewise learned. Youngsters, particularly boys, are actually establishing one kind of hierarchy about values in their minds for school purposes but live according to another when they are out of school. An attempt must be made to correct this dual, confusing role that far too many children feel they must play. Some teachers unknowingly react to children in prejudiced ways. The wise teacher of reading will cherish youth first and skills in reading second. He will behave quite differently from the teacher who cherishes things, materials, and skills first as his own particular value pattern. Whatever teachers do at school, if children value it, they will learn it. Thus, it humbles all of us when we realize that the burden of responsibility is on our own shoulders to see to it that youth is experiencing the right types of reading, thinking, and value-oriented activities. (Author)

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VALUES AND READING

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VALUES AND READING

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Introduction

Once a child has been taught to read or begins to read by himself, adults should focus attention upon what he reads. For several decades more attention has been given to determining the best methods for teaching of reading than has been consigned to the study of how to influence the child to read more widely, more richly, and more deeply. Yet most educators would agree that it is the responsibility of the teacher to raise value questions and to discuss these within the restrictions of pupil maturity, available evidence, the rules of logic, and cultural (ethnic) background.

In the brevity of this paper it would be impractical to attempt to discuss the age-old questions posed elsewhere in periodical literature: "Can values be taught?" "Whose values shall we cherish?" "How can one know for sure if values have been learned?" Certainly these questions deserve the educator's meditation. Moreover, the reader may have his own definition of reading, differing somewhat from the writer of this paper since reading means so many different things to different people. Therefore, at the onset, it seems proper to cite the view that this writer holds about values and the definition to reading in a brief statement so that the remainder of the statements which follow might be analyzed in that context. This writer believes:

> One reads to obtain meaning--reading is for thinking. New ideas affect one's current value system. It is possible to change attitudes through reading if the message is worthy

> enough, strong enough, and sound enough. Internalized attitudes affect values. Thus it is possible for teachers to influence a child's value system through carefully designed instructional acts initiated in the field of reading.

Educators can no longer afford to make reading assignments of an enrichment variety without also looking both at themselves and at the pupils whom they teach. What one believes in, is what he emphasizes in his daily teaching. How can we be sure that our ideas and values are better than someone else's? How can we knowingly affect a pupil's value system through teaching of reading? What are we doing unwittingly and unknowingly to pupils that affect their value systems and thinking about school? It is with each of these pertinent questions that the remainder of this paper's contents will purport to deal.

VALUE CLARIFICATION. Essentially it is not whether our values are at a higher level than our contemporaries or those whom we teach, rather the problem in teaching lies in what we are "blind" to, unwilling to change, or unable to clarify for ourselves or to the satisfaction of others. The teacher of reading is to create conditions that aid pupils in finding values if they choose to do so. One should not force his own values on others but he should help others seek to understand why they believe as they do. When pupils discover why they cherish and prize the values they hold, they may seek new values which are more consistent and more in line with what is termed their own value system.

The teacher of reading must seek to implement these sound psychological propositions in his daily encounterments with children:

(1) Values which are rewarded and reinforced through extended reading assignments are more likely to recur.

(2) Values are more easily clarified in fresh, novel, stimulating classroom experiences.

(3) Values are more easily acquired by children if what is to be learned confirms their previous attitudes, rather than information which runs counter to their previous attitudes.

(4) Values of an individual are markedly revealed through what he reads in his spare time.

(5) Values developed through reading experiences are facilitated more by time spent recalling and discussing what has been read and relating that content to the child's life, than by mere rereading.

(6) Values based on "conscious thinking" tend to become "highly automatic forms of action" by the pupil in future encounterments of similar ideas.

The list above is not exhaustive of the factors and psychological principles one must entertain if he is to deal effectively with a child's value system, but the list is in fact representative and challenging.

Securing the Affective Response in Reading

Obviously not everything in reading is value oriented, nor should it be. Neither should one expect to find material that fulfills all seven criteria mentioned below. But some material must reach each of these value entities at a selected place in a child's educational program. According to Simon (1966) values are based on three processes:

CHOOSING: (1) freely
(2) from alternatives
(3) after thoughtful consideration of the consequences of each alternative

PRIZING: (4) cherishing, being happy with the choice
(5) willing to affirm the choice publicly

(6) doing something with the choice
(7) repeatedly, in some pattern of life

Thus, these processes collectively define valuing. The results the reading teacher obtains through the valuing process are called values.

THREE LEVELS OF INSTRUCTION. Teachers of reading in the content subjects typically operate at one of three levels of instruction. Level one can be labeled as the factual level. Let us suppose that a group of of sixth graders have been asked to read The Declaration of Independence for their history lesson. Note the types of questions that are asked at this level.

Factual level--Declaration of Independence

1. When was it written?
2. Who wrote it?
3. Whom did it affect?
4. What are its various parts?
5. Who accepted it? Who rejected it?

The second level might be coined the cognitive level. The factual level it will be noted was short, one-answer questions; no equivocation. But the cognitive level requires contemplation about what one reads. He must take his facts and use them. For example, ...

Cognitive level--Declaration of Independence

1. At the time of the writing of the Declaration of Independence, what great movements were evident in the country? Who sought to influence the people and for what purposes?
2. Did the document serve to bind the people together for common purposes? Where did it succeed? Where did it fail?
3. What did the writers have to have in common to succeed in its ultimate completion and adoption?
4. What parts of the document were binding to all citizens? States? Other nations?

Thus it can be seen that the second level of teacher operation requires of the pupil a use of his higher level thought processes.

The third level of instruction is titled, the value level. At this level the pupil must know his facts, make decisions based on this knowledge, publicly affirm where he stands on an issue and defend his position to the best of his ability. It is at this third level that his values

are brought into play.

Value level--Declaration of Independence

1. Do you believe it is fair for a select few to determine the policies which affect the multitudes?
2. Had you been one of the writers of the Declaration of Independence what might you have added to the document? Why? On what basis can you defend your point of view?
3. How do you know when something is good or right for all?
4. What rules, regulations, or laws do you have to follow today that you would change if you could? Why do you think they are unjust, unfair, or outdated?
5. Do you think the stand that "all men are created equal" has the same meaning today that it had July 4, 1776? What might you do to see that all men have equal rights?
6. What truths do you believe are "self-evident" today? Which do you hold dear? Why? What are you doing to ensure that your own rights are not breached?

Obviously, the teacher of reading must seek to operate at each level of instruction mentioned above in order that the learning cycle might be completed. Reading without thinking is akin to thinking without valuing. One process without the other can be likened to trying to pull a concrete cart with an abstract horse. When the teacher pre-questions or questions the pupil after the reading act, due consideration must be given to factual, cognitive, and value oriented entities.

THREE STRATEGIES FOR CLARIFYING PUPIL VALUES THROUGH EXTENDED READING. The clarification of values contributes deeply to a pupil's sense of identity and self-worth. Understanding others and what they "stand for", helps the youngster see more clearly who he wishes to be. A good way to help a child see himself more clearly and simultaneously strengthen his tie with someone else is through poetry. For example, note the sampling of questions that might be explored after having

read Herbert Farnham's poetry entitled, "God's Masterpiece" . . .

God took the strength of a mountain...
The majesty of a tree...
The warmth of a summer sun...
The calm of a quiet sea...
The generous soul of nature...
The wisdom of the ages...
The power of the eagle's flight...
The joy of a morning in spring...
The faith of a mustard seed...
The patience of eternity...
The depth of a family's need...
Then God combined these qualities...
And when there was nothing more to add,
He knew His masterpiece was complete
And so He called it--Dad.

To those children that have a dad, one might ask such questions as these: "What are the qualities about your dad that you really like?" "Do you think dads really enjoy correcting you?" "Do you think God was ever lonesome? (On earth He had no father; in heaven, He had no mother)" "What are the responsibilities of a dad? Of a child to his dad?" "What especially do you like to do with your dad?" "Do you sometimes do things he likes to do? Why?" "List three things that he has done in the last 5 days for you that you might not have thought about if I had not asked." "What kind of dad would you like to become?" "Where do you think you've gotten some of your good ideas about the type of dad you want to become?" Teachers who ask these kinds of questions of boys will have those same boys looking more closely at their dads in the next several days and seeing their dads in new ways and new lights not theretofore observed. Dads will love them for it. Certainly poems about mother should be used to serve similar purposes.

How can there be claims of value instruction in schools with the known limitations of poetry reading and study at elementary school levels? Ralph Waldo Emerson was once boasting that Harvard offered all branches

of knowledge. "Yes," said his friend Henry David Thoreau, "all the branches and none of the roots." But in most schools "The humanities provide the roots." Note the values held by this sixth grader who wrote in her poem, "Humanities":

All over the world,
Perhaps in the sea,
Thousands of people
Are different from me!

But similar they are
In a wonderful way,
Their feelings, emotions,
The things that they say.

It's nice to be different
From folks far and wide,
As long as I feel
And look like them inside.

Wise teachers will stop loading their students so full of facts that they can't jump; they know they must help youngsters find material worth valuing and studying. Each of us know that a few lines of poetry, well selected, often can have more value than 10 pages in a history book. For example, consider the "teacher poem" written by Walt Whitman entitled, "There Was A Child Went Forth":

There was a child went forth every day
And the first object he looked upon, that object
he became,
And that object became part of him for the day or
a certain part of the day
Or for many years or stretching cycles of years.

A second strategy for valuing purposes can be found in rich literature. A part of living is accepting sadness as well as joy. Pupils find Charlotte's Web (13) very sad especially when Charlotte explains to Wilbur (the pig) that she is going to die. Even though her babies do hatch, and Fern (the little girl) realizes she is getting too old to come to the barn to talk to the animals, it is very sad because Charlotte dies.

Pupils readily see how values affect mankind when they hear Harriet Beecher Stowe's, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and learn what Abraham Lincoln said upon meeting the author for the first time . . . "So you're the person who started the Civil War."

In Rawls' work, "Where the Red Fern Grows," a boy feels the same sadness Billy feels when the male of the pair of coon hounds is wounded and dies and the female dies of a broken heart (11). Or when Travis must go out and shoot old yeller because he has rabies, the reader seemingly becomes as emotionally involved as Travis is (7).

Still other great books are in abundance for "wringing one's values right out of his heart and mind" as he responds to such works as: Jade Snow Wong's, Fifth Chinese Daughter (15); Joseph Krumbold's And Now Miguel (9); or Eleanor Estes, The Hundred Dresses (5).

A third strategy encompasses the study of values through actual interview. Pupils are asked to query friends, relatives, and professional people concerning the values these individuals hold for daily living. The information obtained is discussed in reading classes and stories are written about these individuals, the attitudes they hold, and the values they cherish. Activities such as this one do much to help children strengthen their own choices and deepen their commitment to values essential to rich, full living.

The three strategies mentioned above are in keeping with advice of authorities who advocate value instruction in the public schools. They are designed to increase the pupil's insight into what he believes and cherishes as early as the elementary school years. How an individual sees himself and the kinds of values he develops are patterns set early in life (6). In terms of achievement patterns alone, Bloom (1) states the

issue as follows:

> We may conclude from our results on general achievement, reading comprehension, and vocabulary development that by age 9 (grade 3) at least 50% of the general achievement pattern at age 18 (grade 12) has been developed, whereas at least 75% of the pattern has been developed by about age 13 (grade 7). The evidence from the Ebert-Simmons (1943) study as well as studies of vocabulary development suggest that about one-third has been developed by the time the individual has entered school.

An analysis of most school programs in the area of value instruction shows a shocking neglect for there appears to be no articulation of behavioral components between the elementary and secondary levels whatsoever. In too many instances there is no focus upon value study in content areas or in developmental reading classes. It is high time that elementary and secondary teachers "get together" on the needs of youth at varying grade levels. Writing to the needs of secondary school students and their commitments to valuing, Hunt and Metcalf (8) provocatively put it:

> The critical test of a person's insights is whether they provide him with a set of beliefs about himself in relation to his social and physical environment which are extensive in scope, dependable in action, and compatible with one another.

PERSONAL RESEARCH. In a study (conducted by the writer) of 20 outstanding teachers of reading and in still another of his investigations comprising 400 intermediate grade pupils who were asked to respond to a 100-item value clarification instrument, some striking observations were obtained. A few of these findings are listed below:

The teachers held that:

a) indepth study of poetry has become a neglected art in far too many elementary schools. One only has to review a few curriculum guides to find that this is true.

b) although there may be many materials written about value instruction, these same materials are "hard to come by" in requisitions of instructional supplies.

c) far too little time is given to the study of values in the elementary school curriculum whether it be the reading area, the social studies, or mental health education.

d) value study is likely typically left to what the author of a reading series has outlined as a minimum requirement. Going beyond his recommendations is not believed to be a general school practice.

e) little boys likely are bearing the blunt of neglect in masculine value reinforcement. Neither materials nor instructional procedures clearly meet their needs.

f) much less time is given to oral discussion about what has been read than is given to "reading orally" for instructional word-attack purposes. Since valuing requires extended amounts of time for discussion and clarifying purposes, value clarification is a much neglected art at several elementary school levels.

What selected children (N=400) say:

a) 72 percent of the boys believed that their reading instruction was primarily girl-oriented while only 40 percent of the girls believed instruction about values was boy-oriented. Consequently, responses of girls supported the contention of boys that materials and instruction were predominantly female-based.

b) 68 percent of the sample had little exposure to indepth study of poetry and some had none at all. This supports the conjecture of the 20 outstanding reading teachers who believed that poetry instruction was a neglected art.

c) 75 percent of the boys indicated dislike of spelling tests on Wednesdays and Fridays, while 60 percent of the girls ranked spelling tests as a favorable item. It can only be conjected here that those girls who were scoring well on them, enjoyed displaying their academic talents. Forty percent of the boys who indicated they did well on tests, still wished they didn't have to take them.

d) 68 percent of the pupils indicated they would rather read about real people, real issues, and real problems than read make-believe, untrue, contrived stories unless those stories contained some significant values and understandings presented for clarifying purposes. Of course nearly all of the pupils desired fiction stories occasionally but even then novel ideas, curiosity items, and intriguing plots were mentioned.

Summarily, it makes little difference whether in fact the boys were actually neglected in their reading program or that they believed they were slighted; --what they believe is more influential than what might be the facts of the case. Moreover, what 20 outstanding teachers believed to be true in general was born out by responses of youngsters in other types of school environments. In still another study this investigator has found that if genuine attempts are made to influence youth favorably toward value clarification with respect to their own lives they are now living, the attitude of these very same youngsters to reading, spelling, writing, and the school in general, changes in positive ways.

VALUES, READING, AND LITTLE BOYS. We have many good teachers in our schools but some of them unknowingly and unwittingly affect the value systems of little boys in negative ways. It is no small wonder that three out of four reading failures are boys. For how one feels about himself has much to do with his success and performance. Until a greater value is shown for little boys in their total educational program it will be doubtful if the reading teacher will be able to do very much about reading failure other than not to become a part of the problem herself. Perhaps helping the boy to have satisfactory reading experiences will be his first stepping stone for rising above certain other problems of a school oriented nature which seems to beset him rather repeatedly.

Read these authentic observations. These are alarming facts but by knowing about them, each of us in our own way can do something to strengthen the educational plan for young boys:

(1) The longer a boy is in school the lower becomes his self-esteem until it begins to rise at about the

senior high and university levels.

(2) Boys try eight times more than girls to answer questions in school, but female teachers call on girls ten times more than boys.

(3) A teacher waits only 2.2 seconds for a response after a boy has been asked a question, but the same teacher will wait 7.7 seconds for a girl to respond.

(4) At all levels, when grades are given, girls are typically given higher grades.

(5) Both boys and girls start alike when earned scores are considered at the Kindergarten levels, but in the journey through school, the motivational curve for girls goes up, while for little boys it goes down until the senior high level where it begins to match girls again (as does self-esteem).

(6) Once one has learned how to read, subsequent books are used for extending personal reading programs, and the materials chosen as well as the instructional proceedings, are more girl-oriented than boy-oriented.

Specifically, what can the reading teacher do to help little boys?

Try the following:

(1) Select stories that are stoked with masculine ideas. Ask global questions which initially mean, "What's the meaning of this from a boy's (man's) point of view?"

(2) Give boys their fair share of classtime. Prime them with information so that they will have something to share at discussion time; read it to them if you must. Soon they will be reading for themselves.

(3) Take them out of remedial situations as quickly as possible. Do as much of the remedial instruction in the regular classroom as feasible. This will build up their ego and increase confidence in their own personal and intellectual powers.

(4) Engage their fathers or masculine guardians in evening activities by sending a note home asking them to listen to their sons read a story selected with the intent of appealing directly to father-son interests.

(5) Shake the hand firmly of a boy when he reads a story well (Don't ever shake him bodily though when he doesn't). Some boys go all of the way through elementary school without a handshake from his teacher.

(6) When a boy does something well at school go over it time and time again before launching him into new and more difficult work. Praise him for that piece of work no matter how small it might be. Remember that adults look at something they have been successful at many times for they know the feeling that comes from knowing that the job was well done.

(7) Keep boys moving. They can't sit still very long. Vary your classroom activities so that there is a better balance between seat activities and mobile experiences. Nearly seventy percent of the school days boys are writing and many of them detest doing so. Let them take turns reading some of their answers to you with no written recording expected.

(8) Ask your boys to list ten things they really like to do as a person. Then have them make a paperback book about three of those ten items. Have them exchange these books with other boys in class; let them also read parts of their book to the class after they have first read it to you. If they can't read or write, use pictures. They supply the pictures and you help them write their book. It will soon be discovered that they can read what was dictated.

(9) write and then read some stories showing where boys and girls are "working together" (4).

Above all, listen to your little boys. An eight-year-old wrote this poem entitled, "Who Am I?", and there is a lesson in it for teachers:

I have many things I want
to say but--
No one listens.
I have many things I want
to do but--
No one lets me.
I have many places I want
to go but--
No one takes me.

And the things I write
are corrected but--
No one reads them.
Who am I?

Boys should not be competing with girls when they are learning to read. The girl will beat the boy and this may stifle future competition. The boy in some circumstances will just give up.

In the United States where the majority of teachers are females, about 80 percent of the pupils who end up in remedial classes are boys. In Germany and Japan, however, where the majority are males, the ratio is the other way around. Once adults fully comprehend the implications of this fact, it will undoubtedly cause some movement in schools designed to separate reading classes for certain boys if not all of them--not only to learn to read, but to read at advanced levels in areas of masculine concern and to report on subjects to other boys who share common interests and experiences.

Summary

Motivation to do good work in reading is a learned behavior. Values involve beliefs and worth and are likewise learned. Youngsters, particularly young boys, are actually establishing one kind of hierarchy about values in their minds for school purposes but out-of-school live another. An attempt must be made to correct this dual, confusing role that far too many children feel they must play.

Some teachers unknowingly react to children in prejudiced ways. The wise teacher of reading will cherish youth first, and skills in reading second. He will behave quite differently from the teacher who cherishes first . . . things, materials, and skills as his own particular value pattern.

Whatever teachers do at school, if children value it, they will learn it. Thus, it humbles all of us when we realize the burden of responsibility is on our own shoulders to see to it that youth are experiencing the right types of reading, thinking, and value oriented activities.

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